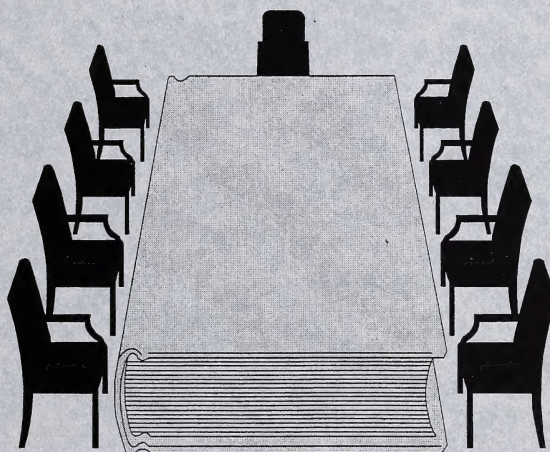# Guidelines for Establishing Regional Consortia

An Initiative for the Improvement of Education and Its Delivery

September 1995

Alberta
EDUCATION

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Definition

A **consortium** is a vehicle to link professional development, inservice and training resources at the local, regional and provincial level to support the development of the knowledge and skills necessary for all people who influence student learning.

Purpose of Consortia

The purpose of regional consortia is to support the successful implementation of school jurisdiction goals as identified in board education plans and school plans as well as the goals and strategies of the three-year business plan. Consortia will broker, coordinate, evaluate, and act as a clearinghouse for available training and development resources. Consortia also may undertake the development of professional development programs to meet emerging education needs. Consortia will provide a collaborative and coordinated approach to the delivery and support of ongoing professional development opportunities for all participants in education. Consortia will help implement school-based decision making, school councils and the functions included in redefined roles and responsibilities. Through collaboration and coordination, consortia will provide improved access to inservice, training and professional development programs at a reasonable cost.

Consortia Membership

College of Alberta School Superintendents
Alberta Teachers' Association
Alberta School Boards' Association
Alberta Home and School Councils' Association
Association of School Business Officials of Alberta
Alberta Universities and Colleges
Business and Community Organizations, where possible

Participation in Regional Consortia

All types of school jurisdictions including public, separate, band-operated, Francophone authorities, private and charter schools may access services through consortia. Although all the needs of these groups might not be met through consortia, the role of a consortium is to broker services--that is, to connect or broker the expertise and knowledge of service providers with those who are in need of inservice and professional development programs.

Number of Regional Consortia

There will be a maximum of six consortia. One proposal, developed by representatives from all education partners, will be invited from each geographic region in Alberta. Possible geographic configurations are outlined in Appendix A. One consortium, the Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium, has operated successfully since 1989.

Establishment Principles for Regional Consortia

Consortia will:
- include all education partners
- provide a mechanism to link resources to meet the teaching and learning needs of the school community
- broker the development and delivery of inservice and professional development programs both to and from schools, school jurisdictions, contract consultants, local, regional and provincial associations and post-secondary institutions
- provide access to services on a cost-recovery basis
- develop and build on existing resource catalogues
- be responsive to local, regional and provincial client needs
- conduct a needs assessment to assist in establishing priorities for program planning and coordinated services
- use, wherever possible, services of existing consortia and professional development structures
- complement existing education organizations which already provide professional development
- use technology and telecommunications in the development and delivery of programs
- employ minimal administrative staff
- coordinate delivery of existing professional development programs at the local, regional and provincial levels
- practise collaboration and facilitation
- practise self-evaluation
- develop a process to evaluate their programs and operations
- identify and be responsive to changing needs in education
- communicate to the public the necessity of professional development programs for all those involved in education.

The Role of Alberta Education in Establishing Consortia

The Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Services, will consider the approval of a consortium based on application. Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Services, will assign an education manager from Regional Services Division as project manager responsible to work with education organizations to coordinate the establishment of consortia in provincial regions.

The governance and administration of consortia must model coordination and collaboration at the local, regional and provincial levels. Basic governance could include the following structures and suggested roles and responsibilities.

Regional Consortium Governing Body
- is responsible for general policy, budget approval, employment contracts and employee evaluation, establishment of committees, annual work plans, linkages to the provincial business plan, jurisdiction plans, school plans and for submitting an annual report to the Minister of Education
- includes one representative from each organization at the local/regional level
- is responsible for drafting the application for approval of a consortium
- is responsible for selecting the members of the management committee and outlining the duties and functions of the management committee and executive director
- ensures each organization is responsible for the expenses of its member on the regional governing body or management committee

Management Committee (five to seven members)
- is selected by and responsible to the governing body
- includes three governing body and three school-level members, including one school council representative
- provides general direction and assistance to the executive director
- reviews needs assessment data
- determines links between three-year business plan, jurisdiction plans, school plans and consortium plans
- creates action plans, including marketing strategy and resource-broker links
- creates work plans
- creates communication plans
- supervises administrative personnel
- delegates responsibilities to executive director

Administrative Structure
- 1.0 FTE executive director and 0.5 to 1.0 FTE technical support depending on the needs of the consortium
- responsible for provincial liaison with other executive directors of consortia in order to plan for efficient and coordinated program development and to coordinate the development of an electronic inventory of resources and service providers across the province

Alberta Education will accept one application from each of six regions for the establishment of a regional consortium. The application must be developed collaboratively by the education partners in the region. A school jurisdiction will be a member of one consortium; however, it is important to note that a jurisdiction may obtain services through any of the regional consortia.

Application will include:

Identification of key education partners
- names, addresses and contact person for boards and organizations involved in establishing the consortium

Pledge of in-kind support from consortium members
- use of office space and equipment
- travel, subsistence, substitute costs for members to participate on the governing body and management committee
- needs assessment costs
- technical assistance such as computer analysis
- staff members to serve on committees
- staff to serve in planning and delivery of programs
- research staff
- member programs available for delivery to all partners; i.e., board sponsored professional development days, specialist council and convention professional development activities, board strategic planning workshops, university/college programs

Name of agent
- in order for Alberta Education to provide funding, one partner must serve as the agent. The consortium will perform all financial transactions including accounts receivable and payable through the agent organization

Connections to Alberta Education's business plan
- links to goals and related strategies in the three-year business plan must be clear in the goals and objectives of the consortium

Mission, mandate, goals, objectives
- based on the Principles for Establishing a Consortium
- include other locally defined goals and objectives from member boards' education plans and school plans
- strategic plans developed by the governing body

Timelines for development
- anticipated timelines for specific goals and objectives related to annual expected outcomes

Governance and administration structure
- outline of proposed structure

Local and regional needs assessment plan
- local needs identified by the governing body and management committee through existing evaluation and data-gathering processes; for example, parent surveys, local professional development committee, regional library board and community needs assessments
- themes from review of board annual education plans and reports as well as school plans

Identification of links with other Alberta consortia
- identify mechanisms for links with, for example, Learning Assessment Consortium, Regional Media Resource Center
- identify mechanisms for links with other potential learning resources in the region, for example, Zone 1 Resource Center, Distance Learning Consortium
- identify links with professional development and training networks of member organizations, for example, specialist councils

Expected outcomes and evaluation plan
- the impact of communication and marketing plans
- the degree of support and use among members
- the relationship between identified needs and programs offered.

Funding

Initiative Funding to Improve Education and its Delivery is included in the *Framework for Funding School Boards*.

Establishment and Maintenance Funding of regional consortia will enable resources to be linked and coordinated at the local, regional and provincial levels to support the development of the knowledge and skills necessary for all people who influence student learning. Alberta Education will provide a maximum of $150,000.00 infrastructure funding per annum for three years for up to six regional consortia approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Services Division, in accordance with the Minister's Guidelines to Establish a Consortium.

Infrastructure funding may be used to provide:
- office space, equipment and furniture, utilities
- personnel and operating cost

Consortia will be approved for a three-year mandate. At the end of the three years, consideration may be given for further infrastructure funding. Consortia programs are expected to operate on a full cost-recovery basis within three years.

Program Funding will be provided to assist regional consortia to coordinate and link available professional development and inservice resources related to the successful implementation of school councils, school-based decision making and coordinated professional development opportunities for all those who influence student learning.

Alberta Education will fund consortia at $2.00 per funded student in each member school authority to a credit dollar amount maximum. For example, a school authority with 5,000 students will have a credit of $10,000.00 with consortium A. The school authority could access a maximum of $10,000.00 worth of inservice and professional development services through the consortium. If the school authority chooses to access some of these services through consortium B, that credit dollar amount would be transferred from consortium A to consortium B. The school authority may choose to use the credit to cover the full cost of one or more programs to the credit maximum or to have its participants charged a reduced amount for each program they access until the full credit has been used.

A consortium eligible to receive the program funding is approved by Alberta Education as set out in the **Guidelines for Establishing Regional Consortia**. The consortium member school authorities are receiving ASFF.

The amount of the credit to a consortium on behalf of a school authority is determined by multiplying $2.00 by the number of grades 1 to 12 students as of September 30, 1995 and under 20 years of age on September 1, 1995.

The consortium will charge the full program cost after the school authority credit amount is fully utilized.

The program funding will not fully fund all inservice training and professional development costs. Therefore, cost to participants for consortium-sponsored activities may include:
- travel costs for consortium staff
- administrative cost including materials
- cost of resource person(s)
- direct contract costs for developing new programs, where necessary

APPENDIX A

POTENTIAL ESTABLISHMENT
CATCHMENT AREAS FOR SIX CONSORTIA

NORTHERN AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Northern Gateway	22	366	5498
Peace Wapiti	27	328	4782
Grande Prairie SD	12	267	4972
Peace River	20	257	4090
High Prairie	12	224	3318
Northland (west half)	17	151	1423
Fort Vermilion	14	165	2691
Holy Family CSRD	3	50	804
North Peace RCSSD	4	66	1042
Slave Lake	1	27	468
Grande Prairie RCSSD	10	145	2445
Total 11 boards	144	2050	31,533

SOUTHERN AREA (SAPDC)

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Grasslands RD	19	228	3752
Holy Spirit RCSRD	14	258	4066
Horizon SD	29	200	3237
Lethbridge SD	22	433	7627
Livingstone Range SD	29	331	4914
Medicine Hat CSRD	9	144	2314
Medicine Hat SD	21	383	6153
Palliser RD	33	256	3736
Prairie Rose RD	33	233	3142
Westwind RD	29	259	4522
TOTAL 10 boards	238	2725	43,463

CENTRAL AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Wild Rose SD	18	330	5423
Red Deer SD	31	567	8354
Clearview RD	21	195	2946
Chinook's Edge RD	33	549	9958
Good Shepherd RCSRD	2	51	927
Wolf Creek RD	30	431	7378
Red Deer RCSSD	9	176	2962
Battle River RD	34	489	7613
Wetaskiwin RD	20	47	4707
St. Thomas Aquinas RCSRD	5	89	1439
Total 10 boards	203	2924	51,707

EDMONTON AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Evergreen CSRD	4	89	1518
Greater St. Albert CRD	16	340	6175
Elk Island Public Schools	41	916	13,968
Sundance CSRD	2	47	835
Fort Saskatchewan CSSD	3	52	800
Black Gold RD	24	488	7941
Parkland SD	24	553	8850
Sturgeon SD	13	275	4657
Pembina Hills RD	19	299	4971
EPSB	209	4276	70,431
ECSB	85	1697	28,965
Grande Yellowhead SD	21	353	6361
Holy Trinity CSRD	3	65	964
St. Albert PSSD	14	361	5934
Sherwood Park CSSD	8	181	3485
Total 15 boards	**486**	**9,992**	**165,855**

CALGARY AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Calgary RCSSD	82	1862	33,145
Rocky View SD	28	573	10,311
Foothills SD	23	336	5907
Golden Hills RD	33	374	5535
Canadian Rockies RD	8	140	1904
Calgary SD	216	5618	91,658
Christ the Redeemer CSRD	6	72	2171
Prairie Land RD	17	178	2043
Total 8 boards	**413**	**9153**	**152,674**

EAST CENTRAL AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Buffalo Trail RD	28	330	5131
Lakeland RCSSD	6	99	1559
St. Paul Education RD	14	237	3764
Northern Lights SD	24	360	6161
Northland SD (east)	9	64	1422
East Central Alta RD	6	105	2668
Aspen View RD	17	227	3559
Fort McMurray RCSSD	9	210	3406
Fort McMurray SD	13	251	4161
Vegreville CSSD	2	31	538
Total 10 boards	**128**	**1914**	**32,369**

POTENTIAL ESTABLISHMENT
CATCHMENT AREAS FOR FIVE CONSORTIA

NORTHERN AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Northern Gateway	22	366	5498
Peace Wapiti	27	328	4782
Grande Prairie SD	12	267	4972
Peace River	20	257	4090
High Prairie	12	224	3318
Northland (west half)	17	151	1423
Fort Vermilion	14	165	2691
Holy Family CSRD	3	50	804
North Peace RCSSD	4	66	1042
Slave Lake	1	27	468
Grande Prairie RCSSD	10	145	2445
Total 11 boards	**144**	**2050**	**31,533**

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Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Grasslands RD	19	228	3752
Holy Spirit RCSRD	14	258	4066
Horizon SD	29	200	3237
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Livingstone Range SD	29	331	4914
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Medicine Hat SD	21	383	6153
Palliser RD	33	256	3736
Prairie Rose RD	33	233	3142
Westwind RD	29	259	4522
TOTAL 10 boards	**238**	**2725**	**43,463**

CALGARY AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Calgary RCSSD	82	1862	33,145
Rocky View SC	28	573	10,311
Foothills SD	23	336	5907
Golden Hills RD	33	374	5535
Canadian Rockies RD	8	140	1904
Calgary SD	216	5618	91,658
Christ the Redeemer CSRD	6	72	2171
Prairie Land RD	17	178	2043
Clearview RD	21	195	2946
Chinook's Edge RD	33	549	9958
Red Deer RCSSD	9	176	2962
Red Deer SD	31	567	8354
TOTAL 12	**507**	**10,640**	**176,894**

EDMONTON AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Evergreen CSRD	4	89	1518
Greater St. Albert CRD	16	340	6175
Elk Island Public Schools	41	916	13,968
Sundance CSRD	2	47	835
Fort Saskatchewan CSSD	3	52	800
Black Gold RD	24	488	7941
Parkland SD	24	553	8850
Sturgeon SD	13	275	4657
Pembina Hills RD	19	299	4971
EPSD	209	4276	70,431
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St. Albert PSSD	14	361	5934
Sherwood Park CSSD	8	181	3485
Wild Rose SD	18	330	5423
Good Shepherd RCSRD	2	51	927
Wolf Creek RD	30	431	7378
Wetaskiwin RD	20	47	4707
St. Thomas Aquinas RCSRD	5	89	1439
Total 20 boards	**569**	**10,940**	**188,611**

EAST CENTRAL AREA

Boards	Schools	Teachers	Students
Buffalo Trail RD	28	330	5131
Lakeland RCSSD	6	99	1559
St. Paul Education RD	14	237	3764
Northern Lights SD	24	360	6161
Northland SD (east)	9	64	1422
East Central Alta RD	6	105	2668
Aspen View RD	17	227	3559
Fort McMurray RCSSD	9	210	3406
Fort McMurray SD	13	251	4161
Vegreville CSSD	2	31	538
Battle River RD	34	489	7613
Total 11 boards	**162**	**2403**	**39,982**